1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 .Y4 Koryak RY4

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Fairs. — I have stated before that during the winter months representatives of firms and petty traders make the round of the settlements and camps of the Koryak, but in two localities[1] veritable fairs are organized. Both take place on the Palpal in localities about one day's journey apart. The more southern one is known as the Koryak Fair; the other, as the Chukchee Fair, on account of the prominent participation in it of the Chukchee from the Palpal. Both fairs are held in March, the Chukchee fair coming first, and the Koryak immediately after. The locality selected is not always the same. It is determined by the Reindeer Koryak from the Palpal, who take into consideration the convenience of the reindeer-owners. The participants in the fair, while on the way, receive intelligence as to the locality decided upon. The same agents and petty traders visit both fairs, which last from three to five days. Among the traders, the ironsmiths from the western shore of Penshina Bay, carrying their iron products, may always be seen. The buyers at the two fairs are different. These fairs are arranged particularly for the benefit of the Palpal Reindeer people, who follow their herds far away from the main routes. Other prominent participants in the fairs are the northeastern Maritime Koryak from the Poqač and the Opuka Rivers, and some Kerek. These fairs are not very crowded. The people assembled number from two hundred to four hundred, and the transactions sum up to a few thousand rubles. The fairs are attended by a Gishiginsk official accompanied by three or four Cossacks, who receive the tribute from the Palpal Koryak, and preserve order. The Cossacks, however, are utterly unable to fulfil this latter duty unless assisted by the Koryak themselves. The Russian Administration prohibits the merchants from opening the fair until the tribute from the Palpal elders has been gathered in.

I witnessed one of these fairs, — the Koryak one. It took place in the valley of the Vaññetat River. The Reindeer Koryak were stationed on an open treeless plain on one bank of the river. They erected one spacious common tent,[2] excepting two Chukchee families, which had tents by themselves. Not far away from the large tent the Russian traders took their stand. The goods were placed on exhibition on sledges and boxes. Two of the Russians had canvas tents in which they slept wrapped in furs. On the opposite bank the Maritime Koryak from Penshina Bay and Bering Sea could be seen. Here mumerous fires were burning, at which tea was boiled and reindeer-meat cooked, and around which the Maritime Koryak slept at night in the open. The temperature at night fell to — 35° C. The poplars and aspens scattered over the grounds were used for fuel. Close to the fires stood the dog-sledges of the Maritime Koryak, on which bags with goods and other articles were heaped. The dogs were tied to trees to keep them from attacking the

[1] See Part I, map.

[2] See Plate XIX, Fig. 2, and pp. 451, 763.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4KoryakRY4

reindeer which were roaming near the tents of the Reindeer Koryak on the other bank. Early in the morning the Maritime Koryak would start crossing the river to the Reindeer Koryak and the Russian merchants, and back to their own camp. The skins of foxes and other animals were procured from the bosom, or brought in bundles, and offered to the merchants in exchange for goods. The merchants sold knives and spears. During the first two days the Reindeer Koryak made offerings of reindeer to the owner of the place and to other deities.[1] On the last day, when the camp was deserted, all that was left were heaps of antlers of the killed reindeer, and traces of the numerous fires. Plate XXIV, Fig. 2, represents the train of a Reindeer Koryak after the close of the fair, ready to leave the deserted camp.

Units and Prices. — The average prices which I gave for the export goods in the above list are the prices made by the merchants for the trading-companies in Vladivostok, to which place the goods were sent. The actual cost of these goods to the merchants is determined by the value attached to the articles received in exchange. These values, as will be seen later, vary greatly. When the petty traders sell fur skins to the merchants for cash, the skins are rated at approximately the prices given in the list. Thus, for example, a red fox varies in price between 4 and 5 rubles; a gray fox, between 12 and 13 rubles. Squirrels, the exchange units of the Tungus, are rated at 20 kopeks apiece; a reindeer-skin, at 1 ruble; and a dressed skin of a grown reindeer-calf, at 1 ruble 50 kopeks; and so on. Koryak who come to Gishiginsk in the winter also sell fur skins for cash, to pay the tribute, and to make purchases at the official store. As a rule, however, trade is still carried on by barter; and the valuation of the import articles by the merchants depends on the locality where the exchange is expected to take place. The farther from Gishiginsk it is, the higher become the prices of the articles. A brick of tea, for instance, — which is one of the most common units, and weighs about 1.5 pounds, — represents at Gishiginsk the value of 50 kopeks; but, as one proceeds away from Gishiginsk to the interior, its price gradually increases up to 2 rubles. At Vladivostok, on the other hand, a brick cost, during my stay there, 30 kopeks. Another important exchange unit, a package of tobacco-leaves, weighing 2 pounds or slightly above that, and rated in Gishiginsk at 60 kopeks, also reaches the price of 2 rubles. Besides, the merchants do some cheating. For instance, special orders are placed with Chinese plantations for bricks of smaller weight than the normal, and tobacco-packages are untied and three are made out of two; the stems of the tobacco-leaves are soaked in water, which is absorbed by the tobacco, thus increasing the weight of the package. Iron and brass ware is sold by the pound, and is rated, iron at from 30 kopeks to 1 ruble; brass,

[1] See Part I, p. 96.